

Message Text

SECRET

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43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

----- 050852

P 071130Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 002

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 4120

EXDIS

PERSONAL FOR ATHERTON FROM BYROADE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, PK

SUBJECT: MILITARY ARMS FOR PAKISTAN

PART I

1. THIS MESSAGE WILL BE IN TWO PARTS. THIS PART
WILL GIVE YOU A BRIEF SUMMARY OF WHERE WE STAND ON THE
QUESTION OF ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN. THE SECOND PART
WILL ASK YOUR INTERVENTION IN ONE SPECIFIC MATTER RELATED
THERETO.

(A) AFTER RETURNING TO PAKISTAN BHUTTO RESPECTED
OUR REQUEST TO HOLD MATTERS IN A CONFIDENTIAL STATE
UNTIL THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE BY US. SINCE THAT TIME
(ALTHOUGH AT TIMES WE GET IRRITATED WITH HIM ON OTHER
THINGS HE SAYS ON HIS POLITICKING TOURS IN PAKISTAN)
HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS RE THE ARMS ISSUE HAVE BEEN QUITE
GOOD. HE HAS IN NO WAY "CROWDED" OVER A POLICY VICTORY,
HAS STRESSED THAT PAKISTAN'S SECURITY CONCERNS WERE
DEFENSIVE ONLY, THAT A BALANCE MUST BE MAINTAINED BETWEEN
SECURITY AND ECONOMIC NEEDS, AND THAT PAKISTAN HAD NO
AMBITIONS TOWARDS ACHIEVING A BALANCE OF MILITARY
STRENGTH IN THE SUBCONTINENT. HIS LETTERS TO INDIRA
GANDHI, STARTED AT HIS OWN INITIATIVE AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT
OF OUR POLICY CHANGE, HAVE BEEN MODERATE AND STATESMANLIKE

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ON THE ARMS ISSUE.

(B) AFTER OUR RETURN HERE BHUTTO READILY ACCEPTED MY SUGGESTION THAT THEY WORK OUT THEIR NEEDS IN A METHODICAL AND WELL BALANCED BASIS AND RESIST TEMPTATIONS TO QUICKLY SEND PURCHASING TEAMS, ETC. TO WASHINGTON. BOTH BHUTTO AND AZIZ AHMED LAID DOWN GUIDELINES TO ALL CONCERNED, INCLUDING THE PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, THAT ALL DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE ABOUT DEFENSIVE ITEMS. STAFF WORK WITHIN THE MILITARY HAS SINCE BEEN PROCEEDING METHODICALLY. HENCE, THE DEPARTMENT HAS HEARD LITTLE FROM US ON THE ARMS QUESTION SINCE THE REMOVAL OF THE EMBARGO.

(C) THE PAKISTANIS SOME TIME AGO GAVE US A LIST OF ITEMS ON WHICH THEY WANTED P & A (PURCHASING AND AVAILABILITY) DATA ONLY, I.E., PRICE, POSSIBLE LEAD TIMES, ETC. THE LIST WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT WELL DONE AND WE REFRAINED FROM SENDING IT ALONG TO WASHINGTON AS RECEIVED AS IT BECAME APPARENT THAT THE LIST HAD NOT GONE THROUGH HIGH LEVEL SCREENING. IT WAS A STAFF EFFORT IN ORDER TO ALLOW THE STAFF ITSELF TO MAKE BETTER RECOMMENDATIONS TO THEIR SUPERIORS AND WAS REASONABLE ENOUGH FROM THAT POINT OF VIEW.

2. IN A DISCUSSION LAST WEEK AZIZ AHMED TOLD ME HE WAS GLAD IT HAD NOT SENT THE LISTING REFERRED TO ABOVE TO WASHINGTON AS IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN MISUNDERSTOOD AS A REQUEST FOR SALES, WHICH IT MOST CERTAINLY WAS NOT. HE CONFIDED IN MY THAT THEY HAD A MUCH MORE REALISTIC LIST, BUT IT WAS AGAIN MERELY A LIST OF ITEMS ON WHICH THEY WANTED P & A DATA, AND DEFINITELY, REPEAT DEFINITELY, NOT A LIST FOR REQUEST TO PURCHASE. HE SAID THE LIST FAR EXCEEDED THEIR CURRENT ABILITY TO FINANCE. IF THEY COULD GET P & A DATA ON THIS LIST, HOWEVER, IT WOULD HELP THEM SET PRIORITIES ON WHAT THEY MIGHT ACTUALLY TRY TO BUY WHEN THEY DETERMINED HOW MUCH FINANCE THEY COULD SPARE FOR THIS PURPOSE. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY CONCERNED THAT THE LIST MIGHT BE MISINTERPRETED AND CAUSE MISUNDERSTANDINGS IN WASHINGTON. HE FINALLY SAID HE THOUGHT HE BETTER TALK TO BHUTTO AND RECOMMEND THAT HE GIVE THE TENTATIVE LIST TO ME FOR OUR STUDY HERE IN THE EMBASSY ONLY

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UNTIL THE LIST COULD BE FURTHER REFINED. IN THE MEANTIME, HE ASKED THAT WE FURNISH SUCH P & A DATA AS WE COULD HERE LOCALLY TO HELP THEM WITH THEIR STAFF WORK. WE CAN IN FACT HELP THEM WITH SUCH UNCLASSIFIED DATA FOR PERHAPS HALF OF THEIR LIST AND ARE IN THE PROCESS OF DOING SO. WE HAVE WARNED THEM THAT SOME OF OUR PRICE AND LEAD-TIME DATA MAY BE CONSIDERABLY OUT OF DATE AND MUST BE CONSIDERED UNOFFICIAL UNLESS AND

UNTIL VERIFIED BY WASHINGTON. (OUR PAST EXPERIENCE WITH THE PAKISTANIS HAS BEEN THAT THEY FINALLY MAKE A PURCHASE REQUEST ON ABOUT ONE ITEM OUT OF SIX ON WHICH THEY HAVE ASKED FOR P & A DATA.) AT PRESENT WE ARE IN A STAFF PLANNING EXERCISE ONLY, BUT WITHOUT OUR HELP THEY WILL LEFT IN THE SAME POSITION AS ONE OF US OVERSEAS WHEN TRYING TO MAKE UP AN ORDER FOR HIS FAMILY FROM SEARS AND ROEBUCK WITHOUT A CATALOGUE, OR EVEN ORDER BLANK. FURTHER, WITHOUT P & A DATA OF THE TYPE REQUESTED THEY HAVE NO WAY OF COMPARING OUR PRICES AND LEAD-TIMES WITH ITEMS THAT MIGHT BE SUPPLIED BY OTHER NATIONS.

3. WE WILL BE ASKING WASHINGTON ON A PIECEMEAL BASIS FOR CERTAIN P & A DATA WE ARE NOT ABLE TO FURNISH HERE. OUR MESSAGE WILL ATTEMPT TO GIVE THE FLAVOR OF THE ACTUAL SITUATION, I.E., THAT NO POLICY DECISIONS AS REGARDS SALES ARE CALLED FOR AT THIS STAGE. THE ONE EXCEPTION WE SEE HERE WOULD BE FOR CLASSIFIED ITEMS THAT WOULD REQUIRE AN EXCEPTION TO OUR NATIONAL DISCLOSURE POLICY, PRIOR TO THE SALE OF SUCH ITEMS TO A COUNTRY IN THE CATEGORY OF PAKISTAN. FOR THESE ITEMS WE WOULD WANT TO BE IN A POSITION TO TELL THE PAKS STRAIGHT AWAY THAT PURCHASE WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE, SO THAT THEY CAN CRANK THIS AS WELL INTO THEIR PLANNING EXERCISE.

4. PART II OF THIS MESSAGE WILL CONTAIN A REQUEST FOR SPECIFIC ACTION ON YOUR PART. SORRY FOR ALL THIS BACKGROUND, BUT HOPE IT WILL HELP YOU TO MAKE THE DECISION.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 055616
P 071130Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 003

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 4120

EXDIS

PART II

5. THE ONLY QUESTION THAT I SEE THAT NEEDS A POLICY DECISION IN THE NEAR FUTURE IS WHETHER WE WILL ALLOW A SMALL TEAM OF PAKISTAN AIR FORCE SPECIALISTS, AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE, TO VISIT THE LTV PLANT AT DALLAS TO RECEIVE AT FIRST-HAND UNCLASSIFIED BRIEFING AND INSPECTION OF THE A-7 AIRCRAFT SO AS TO BE ABLE TO EVALUATE WHETHER OR NOT THEY RECOMMEND TO THEIR GOVERNMENT THAT AN ATTEMPT BE MADE TO EVENTUALLY PURCHASE THIS AIRCRAFT FOR THEIR INVENTORY. AGAINST WHAT I UNDERSTAND TO BE CURRENT THINKING ON STAFF LEVELS AT STATE, I RECOMMEND THAT WE LET THEM PROCEED.

6. AS I SEE IT, THIS IS AN ISSUE WHICH WOULD NOT NORMALLY EVEN GO TO STATE FOR POLICY DECISION. IT IS COMMON PRACTICE FOR THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE PENTAGON AS TO DISCLOSURE OF THEIR PRODUCT TO FOREIGN NATIONALS, BUT OTHERWISE SUCH VISITS ARE PURELY ROUTINE AND QUITE SEPARATE FROM THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER EXPORT LICENSE WOULD BE GRANTED FOR SALE OF THE PRODUCT INVOLVED. I BELIEVE THERE ARE MANY PRECEDENTS WHERE SUCH VISITS HAVE BEEN APPROVED FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF COUNTRIES TO WHICH AUTHORIZATION OF A SALE WOULD BE DOUBTFUL. REPRESENTATIVES OF LTV TELL ME, FOR INSTANCE, THAT THEIR LAST SUCH GROUP WAS FROM ECUADOR.

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7. THERE IS NO ONE HERE FROM BHUTTO ON DOWN THROUGH THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF AIR FORCE WHO IS NOT AWARE OF THE HIGH LEVEL INJUNCTION PUT TO BHUTTO DIRECTLY WHILE HE WAS IN WASHINGTON THAT WE DID NOT WANT TO START OFF AN ARMS PROGRAM TO PAKISTAN WITH ATTACK AIRCRAFT. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE AIR FORCE IS FACED WITH THE PROBLEM OF WHAT SYSTEM THEY SHOULD TRY TO GO FOR, KNOWING FULL WELL THAT IT WOULD BE FOOLHARDY TO GO TO A SYSTEM WHICH COULD NOT REMAIN A MAJOR COMPONENT FOR A PERIOD OF THE NEXT 12 TO 15 YEARS. THE PROBLEM REALLY BOILS DOWN TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THEIR PREFERENCE FOR THE A-7 SYSTEM IS STRONG ENOUGH FOR THEM TO WAIT OUT THE INEVITABLE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS THAT WOULD HAVE TO PROCEED ITS ACTUAL SALE. I BELIEVE, BUT CANNOT BE SURE, THEY WILL COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THEY HAD BEST WAIT FOR THE A-7 RATHER THAN TURN TO OTHER AIRCRAFT THAT SEEMS COMPARABLE FOR THEIR NEEDS, AS THEY

SEE THEM, SUCH AS THE JAGUAR, MORE EXPENSIVE AND
MORE DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN BECAUSE OF POOR FRENCH LOGISTIC
SUPPORT. IT SEEMS TO ME IT WOULD HARDLY BE FAIR
TO AMERICAN INDUSTRY TO FORCE THEM OUT COMPLETELY
BY NOT LETTING THE PAKS EVEN HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR
ADEQUATE EVALUATION. I AM COMPLETELY CONVINCED I WOULD
HAVE BHUTTO'S FULL COOPERATION THAT THEY DELAY ANY ACTUAL
PURCHASE ORDER UNTIL SUCH TIME AS I COULD TELL HIM WE
THOUGH WE COULD ACCOMMODATE
IT. FURTHERMORE, I DO NOT BELIEVE THE
FINANCIAL ASPECT WOULD RESULT IN AIRCRAFT BEING A FIRST
PRIORITY ITEM IN ANY EVENT IN VIEW OF ITS EXPENSE AND
THEIR OTHER NEEDS.

8. AS A SIDELIGHT ONLY (AND HAVING REALLY NOTHING TO
DO WITH THE QUESTION I PUT TO YOU) THE PAK AIR FORCE IS
INDEED IN A BAD WAY. THE CHIEF OF STAFF TOLD ME AT
LUNCH RECENTLY THAT ACCORDING TO U.S. AIR FORCE SPECS
ONLY SIX OF HIS OLD F-86'S ARE SAFELY FLYABLE. THEY
ARE, OF COURSE, FLYING MORE THAN THIS BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO,
BUT THIS IS TOUGH ON MORALE. ALSO, I DID NOT REALIZE
BEFORE HE TOLD ME THAT WE HAVE PHASED OUT SUPPORT OF
THE AIRCRAFT TO THE POINT WE CAN NO LONGER FURNISH
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SPARE PARTS. AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT THAT WILL INTEREST
SOME IS THAT THEIR MIG'S SUPPLIED BY THE CHINESE WHICH
CARRY VERY LITTLE ARMAMENT ARE ONLY FLYABLE FOR THE
UNBELIEVABLE SMALL AMOUNT OF 50 TO 60 HOURS WITHOUT
COMPLETE ENGINE OVERHAUL. IF WE EVER GET TO THE
QUESTION OF SALES APPROVAL, HIS PRESENTATION THAT
THERE CAN BE NO ADEQUATE DEFENSE OF PAKISTAN WITHOUT
SOME STRIKE CAPABILITY AGAINST ARMOR (INCLUDING ALL-
WEATHER OR NIGHT) ACROSS PAK BORDERS SHOULD AT LEAST BE
CONSIDERED BY WASHINGTON AUTHORITIES. THIS MOST CERTAINLY,
HOWEVER, IS NOT A PART OF THE PROBLEM PRESENTED IN THIS
MESSAGE.

9. THE PRIMARY REASON WE WENT THROUGH WITH THE
DIFFICULT DECISION TO LIFT THE BLOCKADE IS THAT IT HAD
BECOME HIGHLY DISCRIMINATORY AGAINST PAKISTAN. HAVING
DONE THIS, I BELIEVE IT JUST AS DISCRIMINATORY THAT THEY
NOT BE ALLOWED TO AT LEAST LOOK AT ANY OF OUR PRODUCTS
ON WHICH SALES WOULD NOT BE FORBIDDEN BY A NATIONAL
DISCLOSURE POLICY. THEY RELUCTANTLY ACCEPT THE POLITICAL
FACT OF LIFE THAT WE MOST PROBABLY WOULD NOT APPROVE
PURCHASE AND EXPORT OF THE A-7 AT PRESENT. BUT WE ARE
TALKING ABOUT ITEMS WITH RELATIVELY LONG LEAD-TIMES
AND NONE OF US CAN FORESEE AT PRESENT WHAT EVENTS MIGHT
TRANSPIRE THAT MIGHT AFFECT A FUTURE POLICY DECISION ON

SALES. THERE IS, OF COURSE, A GREAT IMBALANCE EVEN NOW AND WE ARE ALL ABOARD IN MAKING NO EFFORT HERE TO BALANCE THINGS UP WITH INDIA. EVEN SO, I ASSUME THE EVEN GREATER IMBALANCE THAT SOVIET MIG 23'S WOULD GIVE INDIA, WHICH SEEMS AS OF NOW A POSSIBILITY, IF NOT A PROBABILITY, WOULD BE AN ELEMENT TO BE CONSIDERED. ONE OF COURSE CAN THINK OF OTHER THINGS AS WELL.

10. THE PAKS WOULD NOT EXPECT, OR IN FACT DESIRE, ANY PUBLICITY AS REGARDS AN EXPLORATORY TEAM TO DALLAS, AND IT IS A LITTLE HARD TO SEE HOW PUBLICITY WOULD HAPPEN UNLESS IT WERE LEAKED IN WASHINGTON, AS A RESULT OF WIDE SCALE DISCUSSIONS WHERE WHICH TENDS TO MAKE THIS A MAJOR POLICY ISSUE QUITE BEYOND WHAT IT WOULD SEEM TO DESERVE AT THIS POINT. IF YOU CAN GIVE US A GO-AHEAD ON THIS IT WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED AS IT WILL FOR SOME

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TIME MOLLIFY THE PAK AIR FORCE AND PLANNERS. IF YOU FEEL YOU CANNOT DO SO, I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE MATTER BE CHECKED WITH THE SECRETARY PRIOR TO REPLY SO THAT HE WILL BE IN A POSITION TO RECALL HIS EXACT CONVERSATION ON THIS SUBJECT WITH BHUTTO ON HIS TRIP HERE LAST OCTOBER. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT WHEN THEY WERE ALONE BHUTTO ASKED FOR APPROVAL FOR A TEAM TO GO TO DALLAS FOR THE WAS THAT THE SECRETARY, STILL UNCERTAIN OF COURSE AS TO WHEN WE WOULD BE ABLE TO REMOVE THE EMBARGO, INDICATED THAT THE MATTER COULD BE LOOKED AT AGAIN IN JANUARY.

BYROADE

NOTE BY OC/T: ISLAMABAD 4120 (SECTION 2 OF 2). APPARENT OMISSION IN LAST LINE OF TEXT. CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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